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Friendship

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THE BISHOP'S LETTER

It was a great joy to celebrate the tenth anniversary of my consecration as Bishop of Taiwan. I am very grateful to those who made the effort to attend such an occasion, especially those from other denominations. I am also very thankful for the publication of Dick Corsa's book, "From Cottage to Cathedral - a narrative history of the Episcopal Church in Taiwan" which, miraculously after ten years in the preparation, was published one day before my anniversary and was available to be a gift for those who were present. I think it is an adequate and meaningful gift for such an occasion. Our deep thanks to all who contributed to the writing and publication of this book.

St. Paul said, "For the message of the cross ... is the power of God." [I Cor 1:18] "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power." [I Cor 2:4] In today's church, the demonstration of the Spirit's power is not visible to people because we tend to be intellectual and philosophical, or psychological, in our approach to understanding. In order to help people to become more aware of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, our Diocese arranged two special retreats, the first at our diocesan convocation, and the second the beginning of May at the same place and with the same speaker, Father Joseph Lee, S.J. Most of the

attendees, I feel, are very eager to have such an experience. We fervently pray that the Holy Spirit which was given to us on our baptism and at our confirmation will again enlighten us and transform us into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ. "O, Holy Spirit, come!" , we pray.

It was a great honor for me to be invited to attend the consecration of the Rev. David Shoji Tani as the third Bishop of Okinawa. It was also a great joy to meet all the bishops from NSKK for the second time. I was delighted to be able to carry copies of Dick Corsa's book, "From Cottage to Cathedral" to most of the bishops in Japan. I found they have very keen interest in that book for there is one special chapter about NSKK - Mission in Formosa 1896-1946. It is my belief that this book will revive the relationship between NSKK and the Taiwan Episcopal Church. I also wish to give thanks here to Bishop Saneaki Nakamura for his close relationship with this diocese in his episcopacy. I deliberately chose this special occasion to visit the Diocese of Okinawa with a hope to strengthen the relationship between our two dioceses in the future. In addition to being so close geographically we are also very close in our past histories in connection with the Diocese of Hawaii.

Since the last edition, we have been pleased to have the visits of Dr. David Scott from

Virginia Seminary, Rev. Jerry Drino from Province VIII of ECUSA, and the Rev. Dr. Peter Leung from CMS England. Their visits are significant for they remind us once again that we are not alone. We are, in fact, a member of a world family and common heirs of the Anglican tradition.

We are extremely excited and pleased about the new partnerships with Province VIII that came out of Father Drino's visit. The American dioceses will send American college students to Taiwan as coordinators for an English Summer Camp at the College of St. John's and St. Mary's for the purpose of offering conversationalist English in both work and play situations. Hopefully this will begin in 1999. Even sooner, Taiwan may begin to benefit from this partnership, for Province VIII will help us to find Americans to teach English in several of the parish kindergartens. This is an important part of our

ministry here and good English teachers are increasingly difficult to identify and recruit.

Family" will be the special focus for the diocesan ministry this year. Family has been regarded as the foundation of the society. Now the traditional values of family have been challenged and shaken. It is therefore inevitable for the Church to pay attention to it. We will encourage parishes to develop their own strategies for this issue. The diocese will start off with couples. A seminar for the growth of couples will be held at Evergreen Hotel, Sun Moon Lake in August. We pray this will be a fruitful time for those who plan to attend.

Lambeth is near. May God help me to be ready for such a wonderful and historical time of sharing and fellowship. Please pray for the preparation and implementation of the Lambeth conference and all who plan to attend. May God's spirit be with us.

GOD'S GRACIOUS MONTH

By David Scott

On Sabbatical leave from teaching theology and ethics at Virginia Seminary in the US, I began my month-long visit to the Episcopal Church in Taiwan at the end of February. My home base was FuJen Catholic University. I lived with the theology faculty and taught a course in Anglican Roman-Catholic

theological dialogue. Also I taught a course in Anglican ethics at the Cathedral, with Margaret Chuang serving as my translator.

Bishop Chien helped me greatly to experience the life of the diocese by visits to parishes in Tamsui [Advent], Shihlin [Good Shepherd], Taichung [St. James],

Hualien [St. Luke's] and the beautiful church in Gaocheung. I was privileged to preach in each of those parishes as well as the Cathedral of St. John in Taipei and the diocesan convocation at Catholic Manresa House in Chunghua. I was also able to meet with the faculty of St. John's and St. Mary's Institute of Technology for a talk on global modernization and its moral challenges for Christian education as the guest of President and Mrs. Chang.

Although I was in Taiwan only one month, I gained some impressions. My strongest impression is the hospitality of Bishop Chien, his family and staff. We loved him. They were extremely generous with their time and their care.

They made it possible for me to see so much of the diocese and of Taiwan in such a short time.. Through them I was privileged to attend a traditional wedding feast He handled his chopsticks and the toasts very well.; to suffer the agony and the resulting well being of two traditional Chinese kung-fu massages He screamed loudest of us all but then ordered back-to-back sessions; to enjoy a traditional Chinese breakfast at a sidewalk cafe; to have two lessons in Tai Chi Chuan at Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park He has real potential at this; to attend a performance of the Taiwan national opera and to be introduced to some of the delicious dishes for which Taiwan is world famous All rumors to the contrary he did NOT eat stinky tofu and we apologize for making him ill with the odor.

Because Bishop Chien and others made it possible for me to travel outside of Taipei, I could see the difference between the noisy,

bus-motorbike-car-people- choked streets of Taipei and the broader, tree-lined, slower paced and open streets and cities of Taichung, Hualien and Gaocheung. The rapid pace and hard driving enterprise of Taipei fascinated me, but I learned the truth of Bishop Chien's words, "Taipei is not the whole of Taiwan." I was also impressed by the dedication and high-quality of the church leadership, the lay leaders and the seminarians I met.

Anglican laity I met are making substantial contributions to the life of the church and to the whole of Taiwan. The Bishop's leadership is thoughtful and visionary for the future; sharing authority to promote the ministry of all; planting a new parish at St. Timothy's in Kaocheung; forging close ecumenical ties, especially with the Roman Catholic Church; developing Christian education through the Trinity Institute.

I left Taiwan overwhelmed with thanks for the warm hospitality, the deep Christian faith and the intelligent leadership that I met in the Episcopal Diocese of Taiwan. My visit strengthened my faith. It gave me a better understanding of the richness of this part of the Anglican communion and this part of God's world.

With apologies to Dr. Scott - The Bishop's Staff

A Report from Taiwan

by

the Rev. Jerry Drino, Director of InterCultural Ministry Development(ICMD)

Province 8

My visit to Taiwan began ten hours before I arrived at Taipei. Having just taken off from San Francisco International Airport I said hello to a Taiwanese student sitting next to me on his way home from Boston University. Ten hours later our conversation was still going as we landed in Taiwan. I had received a fairly full introduction to life in this country from a non-Christian young adult who was fascinated by the little information I had of the history and work of the Episcopal Church in this part of the world.

I had come to Taiwan to discover the diocese where the sun first rises each day in Province 8. I am embarrassed to say that in the nine years that I have been Director of ICMD I had not visited this culturally rich part of the Episcopal Church. I had come at the invitation of Bishop Chien to meet with the clergy to explore new ways of Bible study, to enter into dialogue with the President of St. John's and St Mary's Institute of Technology, and to present a plan for strategic planning for congregations in the Northern Deanery.

What impressed me most was the vision in Taiwanese culture for its youth to participate fully in the development of the Pacific Rim in preparation for the 21st Century, the "Asian Century. I came to find

ways to link the rest of the sixteen American dioceses of Province 8 to Taiwan. The common ground was found in the Diocese of Taiwan's deep commitment to youth, especially as it relates to learning American English.

When Bishop Chien and I had dinner with Dr. Andrew Chang and his wife, Florence of SJSMTI, a great possibility for a partnership was unveiled: establish an English Summer Camp at the college. The idea would be to bring 10-12 American college students to Taiwan for a month for the purpose of offering opportunities for conversational English in both a classroom and recreational settings. I went back to the YMCA where I was staying and found myself awake at 3:00 AM, my mind racing with possibilities of how to enable this to happen. A second conversation with Dr. Chang filled in more details.

Returning to the U.S. I had several conversations with Helen Netos, the Executive Director of Province 8. We both agreed that Taiwan was offering us a very important invitation to focus the resources of our program networks in developing a new partnership with this diocese. What we are proposing is that at the September meeting of the Program Group of the Province this

proposal will be at the center of the agenda. What is obvious is that the Asian, Youth, Young Adult, Higher Education, and Camps and Conference networks of the 16 dioceses, together with the ECW and UTO are natural participants in shaping and implementing the proposal. It would be hoped that coordinators from Taiwan and the U.S. could be identified by then and be present at this meeting, so that in the Summer of 1999 we would be able to launch the camp.

I also carried the concern of several of the parishes that have kindergartens and who

are looking for American college students to teach for a year or so and a commitment to make these positions known. I was deeply moved by the hospitality of the bishop and his family; the rich exchange of ideas and concerns among the clergy and lay leaders in the planning sessions; the delightful evening among the English speaking congregation of Good Shepherd; and the rich worship experiences at the Cathedral and Good Shepherd on Palm Sunday. I now know the way to Taiwan and I will not be a stranger to your wonderful diocese and country.

I AM THE LORD'S SERVANT:A SERMON CELEBRATING BISHOP CHIEN'S TEN YEARS AS BISHOP

By David Scott

"I am the Lord's servant, said Mary; may it be as you have said" In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We are gathered here in the context of this Eucharist to celebrate and give thanks for the ten years of service of bishop John Chien as bishop of this diocese in God's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. To have the opportunity to preach God's Word on this occasion is a great joy to me . I thank the bishop for this opportunity.

The Bishop has chosen the Feast of the Annunciation for the thankful celebration of his ministry as bishop. The story of the

Annunciation to Mary is about human response to God's call to service.

Bishop Chien, in the last issue of Friendship, wrote that "In my last ten years my focus is to encourage people to participate, and to mobilize the people of God in this church." As the first Taiwanese bishop of this church, Bishop Chien has wanted to enable the ministry of every member of the church. In this spirit of empower the ministry of the whole church, I want to interpret the Annunciation story both a story about Bishop Chien's ministry and the ministry of each of us, whether lay or ordained.

The story of the Annunciation begins with God sending an angel to Mary with a message. That message was that God had a role for her to plan in God's plan of salvation. The ministry of each of us begins with God's initiative. God, somehow lets us know that he has a work for us to do as part of his plan of salvation. Christian ministry begins with God, with God's purposes and God's call to us.

Mary received that call through an angel's message. Bishop Chien received his call through the diocesan convocation which elected him as bishop. I received my call through an inner demand to pursue full time ministry in the church, a call that later became a clear call to fulfill that ministry as a teacher. I invite you to think about how you first encountered God's call to you. In every case, God takes the first step and through some means, perhaps the call of an official body in the church, or through an individual, or through an angel's voice or an inner experience, calls us to ministry.

When Mary heard that God had a purpose for her to fulfill in his divine plan, her first reaction was bewilderment and confusion. "She was deeply troubled by what he said and wondered what this greeting could mean."

Surely that was the experience of Bishop Chien and his family when he first heard of his being elected as bishop. What will this mean for me and for my family? So also, when we stand at the beginning of our ministries, or at the beginning of a new kind of ministry, we wonder what will this mean for me and for those whom I love? When we first hear God's call, we don't know what it will mean for us; we are uncertain, perhaps

bewildered and even deeply troubled. In his convocation address two Saturdays ago, Bishop Chien said he was told that the job of bishop was a killing job. That certainly must of deeply troubled him. What would the role of bishop mean? So Mary wondered. So we also wonder when we first hear God's call.

The second part of the story of Mary's annunciation tells us God's angel made clearer to Mary what her role would be: to bear a son, Jesus, who would be king of his people and Son of the Most High. This is the second stage of every Christian's ministry. After the call, we live into the work which God has given us to do. We learn the full extent and importance of that work.

Bishop Chien tells us that he gained a clear vision of what he believed God wanted him to do during these past ten years as bishop. Indeed he has had time to live into his role as bishop. He is the first bishop of this diocese to serve more than ten years. He saw his call to found two new parishes in the diocese, to see four deacons become priests. He saw his call also to disperse authority in the diocese. One way he did this was to withdraw as chair of the Commission on Holy Orders to others. He also saw the need to further relations between the Anglican Church and other churches. He helped establish the National Council of Churches in Taiwan and now serves as its chair. He has established a good working relationship with FuJen University and its theological school. He has established lines of communication to community by serving on the Board of Tunghai University and he has developed theological education in the diocese through

Trinity Theological Institute.

Clearly, Bishop Chien's vision of his work as bishop became clear as he lived into his role. God made clear to him, what he wanted Bishop Chien to do.

So it is with each of our ministries. Only as we live into the first call of God to serve, do we begin to discover the full task that God has in mind for us. As the months of service become years and the years gather and become a decade, we see what God wants from us as our life's work. So it was for Bishop Chien, and so it is for us.

But, when the angel told Mary what her role would be, her reaction was a sense of incapacity, of inadequacy. "How can this be?" Mary asked, when the angel told her what God would do through her.

This is also our human experience as ministers of God. When the full range of responsibilities opens up, we feel inadequate. We look at our human resources and we say, "I can't do what the Lord wants me to do; I am inadequate for the task."

This clearly has been Bishop Chien's own experience and reaction to the call to serve as bishop. In his latest message in the diocesan Newsletter, Bishop Chien writes, "I am a country boy and from a family of poor peasants. I do not deserve the honor of being bishop." Also, he is painfully aware of the heavy toll this job takes on a person's health. So Bishop Chien is aware that his purely human resources are limited and he has to rely very much on God's help day by day.

This brings us to the final part of the story of the annunciation to Mary. Mary cries out to the angel, "How can I possibly

accomplish what God wants me to do?" The angel assures Mary that God will provide the means and the strength she needs. "The Holy Spirit will come upon you," the angel says. "The power of the Most High will overshadow you."

That has been Bishop Chien's experience also. He said to me that knows that only God's assistance has made it possible for him to serve as bishop these past ten years.

Through the challenge of the heavy tasks of this ministry, he has learned to trust in the power of God's Holy Spirit and the power of almighty God to overshadow him to enable him to do what he could not do of his own strength.

Surely this is the experience of each of us as we live year after year into our ministries. As we serve, whether as laypersons or as clergy, we realize how weak we are. We realize that our motives are usually quite mixed; that our physical strength is very limited; that our knowledge is not enough; that our maturity and understanding are insufficient. We discover that we are earthen vessels.

But, through God's grace, we discover that somehow God can even work through us to accomplish His will and work in the world. We discover that God's grace comes over and over again to renew us; to pick us up when we fall; to give us courage when we become discouraged; to keep us going, when we don't seem to be making any progress in our ministry. We discover that God's Holy Spirit is working through us despite all our limitations and that God's mighty hand is overshadowing us. This is a great discovery; that God is

assisting us in our work. He gives us the tasks and the strength to do them.

Mary's final word, therefore, to God's Angel, is "Yes." "I am the Lord's servant," she says, "may it be as you have said." This has been Bishop Chien's response to God's call that he serve as bishop. "I am the Lord's servant; may it be as God wills."

God wins us over to be his willing servants, indeed, to be his joyful servants. In the midst of struggles and disappointments of ministry, of your ministry and mine, we discover that our deepest fulfillment comes in

serving God. We are God's servants; and it is good so. To serve God and our neighbor is why God created us. And to serve God and our neighbors brings the deepest satisfactions in our lives. So our final word as God's ministers is Mary's word: " Yes, I am the Lord's servant; may it be as God wills." We give thanks to God that this has been Bishop Chien's response to God's call to him: "Yes, I am the Lord's servant; may it be as God wills."

Amen

REFLECTIONS UPON PEACE FOR PENTECOST

Graham Doyle

'Peace be with you' - a short and precise sentiment, easy to say but difficult to achieve. These words have become a Christian greeting ever since Christ used them after His resurrection. He used them at this significant moment because he wished that his ideas contained in the words of greeting might become the reality and not just words. Indeed he used them to link his ministry with the vision of the prophet Isaiah who had seen in the coming Messiah the one who was to be The Prince of Peace. This post resurrection moment showed that the final earthly Christ at the time when this was being fulfilled, the Christ event was at hand.

Of course the greeting itself was not new, as it was the regular Jewish religious way of saying hello. But in the context of St. John's Gospel this greeting was meant to emphasize so many other things as well. At that moment it had shown once again that Jesus was The Christ, the Prince of Peace as foretold by Isaiah. In true keeping with Jesus' task of reforming his fellow Jews into a new understanding of the Messiah it was aimed at presenting an universalist picture of the role of the Messiah. St. John links this greeting to Thomas' confession of 'My Lord and My God' so that the function and the reality of this new understanding of the Messiah are made

clear. Jesus as The Christ himself is God bringing peace to the people of God which is what Isaiah spoke about.

The link and the purpose are intentional so as to leave no doubt that these two statements of greeting and confession are now in the final stages of fulfillment. God's will was to save all creation through a whole and renewed people. In the Bible the word 'peace' itself had many senses. The most common Jewish understanding of it was 'well-being but tied to justice'; that meaning and understanding could of itself be a foundation to bring about God's peace. Firstly, there was an internal dimension and secondly an external dimension or community dimension. The one led to the other and as it did it was to spread out this peace. To be at peace with oneself enabled the wider dimension to be hoped for and worked at. Real peace could only come from God by trusting in Him, and worshipping Him, and acting it out in daily living. This defined justice as bringing about peace through an attitude of fairness in dealing with others and the natural creation.

Because the era of the Messiah was to usher in God's rule on earth, so it would be one of peace. For Christ to say what He said and when He said it and to whom He said it, made it a clear statement that as the risen Christ, he was indeed the Christ of God. In our modern liturgies, the 'Peace' and its greeting, revive this truth, so while in one sense it is a personal thing, a personal greeting, it really is God's greeting, symbolic of the whole purpose of salvation. When we pass on to others something more than just a greeting is intended when we use it. Therefore, the

greeting must be backed up in equal measure with action, otherwise the greeting would only be vain and sentimental.

While this passage of St. John seems to focus upon another resurrection appearance as proof of Jesus as the Christ, the more important message I feel, is the greeting itself. This alone gives substance to God's approval of Jesus as the Christ. How indeed could Christ be Christ, unless, in his exalted existence beyond time and space, He greeted and encouraged His friends and His doubters, that from now on God's peace, was the true human way of experiencing God's salvation which was his purpose.

At Pentecost, when we celebrate the power of the Holy Spirit, surely this is what we mean as Christians. It is the central and essential part of the Gospel to say 'Peace be with you'.

If you want information about being active peacemakers contact:

1. The Episcopal Peace Fellowship
PO Box 28156 Washington DC 20038 USA
E-mail: epf@igc.apc.org
<http://www.nonviolence.org/epf>

2. Fellowship of Reconciliation
The Eirene Centre The Old School Clopton Kettering Northants NN14 3DZ
E-mail: fellowship@Gn.apc.org
<http://www.gn.ape.org/forel>

TAICHUNG REPORT

Easter was celebrated jointly with the Chinese congregation. On Palm Sunday we had a joint Palm Procession from the main gate into the church. I preached in the service with excellent interpretation by Jerry Liang. During Holy Week we had a joint communion on Maunday Thursday and Easter Eve. The joint communion on Easter Day saw many more people attend from the English speaking community than usual, including many Philippinos. There were two services, one in Chinese by Charles Chen and one in English by me. The service was followed by a joint lunch with both congregations sharing the fellowship.

The English congregation is averaging about 18 at present. I am very fortunate to have the solid, faithful support of the 'hard core' of the English speaking congregation. I am very grateful for their support and encouragement. I have not missed a Sunday since I arrived in October and neither have most of them.

This month on the 17th May we will welcome the Rev. Dr. Peter Leung to our service. He is from the headquarters of the Church Missionary Society in London.

On the 28th of this month I will begin leading a morning Bible study at the YMCA on San Min Road for the English language students there, most of whom are housewives, I understand. This will be an

outreach to the Chinese community.

I like to get out into the community and am a member of the Toastmasters Club in Taichung. I have made many friends here among the Chinese community. I continue to learn Chinese with a once a week lesson, supplemented by language exchanges. This is a great challenge for me but very rewarding.

I am trying to increase the English language congregation further, but this is hard going with a small return for a large effort. We have some good and open discussions following the service, usually on the sermon.

I have been going down to Tainan once a month to preach at the English language congregation there, which is about the same size as the one in Taichung. I get a warm reception from them.

We are looking forward to the feast of Pentecost, when we will celebrate God's gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the life He gives to the people of God.

Here at St. James, we would welcome your prayers for the future of the English language ministry here, and for our growth; also for our struggling financial situation.

The Rev. Stephen Harrop
English Language Chaplain

ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

The English congregation participated in two memorable events this month, the Bishop's 10th anniversary celebration and the combined Easter service and outing with the Chinese congregation. On March 25, Bishop Chien chose to celebrate his tenth anniversary with a thanksgiving service at St. John's Cathedral in Taipei. It is typical of this great and good leader to celebrate by giving thanks to God for all that He has done to bless this ministry and this diocese. There was indeed much to be thankful for. The renovations of the cathedral parish hall and Kennedy Hall were first on the agenda. At 5:30 there was a service in the parish hall which has approximately doubled in size with more light and better seating. The service was solemn to give thanks and to dedicate this newly renovated space to God's use and glory. There followed a time of fellowship with a birthday cake and traditional Chinese dishes. It was great fun to meet Episcopalians from other dioceses and representatives from other denominations. Our own Bishop John and the Roman Catholic representatives of Taiwan and the Vatican as well as a numbers of nuns from FuRen University gave an especially festive and solemn presence in their long robes. The thanksgiving mass followed in the sanctuary with Prof. Dr. David Scott giving the sermon and Archbishop Di delivering greetings from Cardinal Shan. Following the service, the

Bishop presented everyone present a copy of "Cottage to Cathedral - a narrative History of the Taiwan Episcopal Church".

Easter Sunday following the combined service, three buses headed for Rustic Valley recreation area for lunch and an outing in a lovely natural setting. People ate too much, visited, took long walks and generally enjoyed themselves. The joint Easter outing has become a tradition at the Cathedral. The English congregation, especially, looks forward to it.

The Philippino members of the congregation still come in smaller numbers although there has not been another problem with police or brokers. Hopefully, this situation will soon be resolved to our satisfaction. Your prayers about this matter are much appreciated. These wonderful, devout members of our congregation do not deserve such harassment.

Those of you not now living in Taiwan may be interested to know that Dean Lin has brought an artist with flowers into the life of the Cathedral. The sanctuary is alive with both hanging baskets and huge altar arrangements in the most delicate and exotic blossoms available in this sub-tropical island. The entire room has taken on the feeling that this is, indeed, God's beautiful world.

EWG